

The United Nations intends to remain in Afghanistan



3.) Secretary-General António Guterres addresses the Security Council meeting on the situation in Afghanistan. Photo credits: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

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After the fall of Kabul, the United Nations has reiterated its commitment to stay and deliver aid to millions of people in need in Afghanistan.

The United Nations intends to remain in Afghanistan to continue providing its impartial assistance; supporting efforts to restore peace and stability, promoting the rights and dignity of all Afghans and providing humanitarian help to millions most in need.

The Organization is particularly concerned about violations of human rights and the future of Afghan women and girls.

Some 18 million people in the country need aid

assistance and one in three children is expected to be severely malnourished this year, said UN Children's Fund, [UNICEF](#).

"While some UN personnel who are not location dependent have temporarily been relocated, the majority of humanitarian personnel are staying to support the humanitarian response in line with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence," Ramiz Alakbarov, United Nations Deputy-Special Representative of the Secretary General in Afghanistan said in a [statement](#).

„The humanitarian community – both the UN and non-governmental organizations – remain committed to helping people in Afghanistan. While the situation is highly complex, humanitarian agencies are committed to supporting vulnerable people in Afghanistan who need us more than ever," he added.

Meanwhile, the UN office for humanitarian affairs, [OCHA](#), reported that teams have been deployed around Kabul to evaluate needs. The UN agency and partners this year launched a \$1.3 billion appeal for the country, which is currently less than 40% funded.

"Despite immense challenges, humanitarian organizations – both the UN and non-governmental organizations – in Afghanistan are committed to stay and deliver aid and services to millions of people in need while adhering to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence," OCHA said in a statement.

Refugees and internally displaced people

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has released a [non-return advisory](#) for Afghanistan, calling for a bar on forced returns of Afghan nationals, including asylum seekers who have had their claims rejected.

The agency has welcomed the recent actions taken by several states to temporarily halt deportations of failed asylum-seekers.

For the moment, the number of people leaving Afghanistan in search of shelter in neighbouring countries has been relatively low, *UNHCR spokesperson Shabia* Mantoo told a press conference in Geneva.

“Out of the hundreds of thousands of people that have been displaced, we have now 550,000 people displaced within the country, so they are still within Afghanistan,” she said. “The majority of those have fled in recent weeks and 80% of those that are newly displaced are women and children,” Shabia Mantoo said.

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Appeal for restraint

As desperate Afghans were trying to escape the Taliban and board planes during chaotic scenes at Kabul airport on Monday, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for international unity on Afghanistan, in a briefing to an emergency session of the Security Council.

At the emergency session on Monday, UN Secretary-General António Guterres appealed for the Council to stand as one, and ensure that human rights were upheld, humanitarian aid continued, and that the country does not again become a platform for terrorism. He [said](#) that the **“following days will be pivotal”** and urged **“all parties, especially the Taliban, to exercise utmost restraint to protect lives and to ensure that humanitarian needs can be met.”**

Following the meeting, the Security Council issued a

statement calling for a cessation of hostilities and the establishment, “through inclusive negotiations”, of a new government in Afghanistan which would be united, inclusive and representative, with women participating.

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The respect of human rights, rights of women

The Secretary-General highlighted the need to protect civilians and allow humanitarian access. He urged nations to show willingness to receive Afghan refugees, and to halt any deportations. **“Now is the time to stand as one,”** he said.

The UN chief called for the international community to “speak with one voice” to uphold human rights, and voiced particular concern over **mounting violations against women and girls.** “It is essential that the hard-won rights of Afghan women and girls are protected,” he stressed.

“They are looking to the international community for

support – the same international community that assured them that opportunities would be expanded, education would be guaranteed, freedoms would spread and rights would be secured.”

The 15 ambassadors expressed deep concern about the number of reported serious violations of international human rights law and human rights abuses, and stressed the “urgent and imperative need” to bring those responsible to justice.